

Chapter 2 Travel Authorizations

265 FW 2

2.1 Purpose. This chapter provides policies and responsibilities for implementing travel authorization activity for the Service.

2.2 Scope. The provisions of this chapter apply to all persons traveling under temporary and permanent change of station assignments for the Service.

2.3 Policy. Travel authorizations will be provided to accomplish the Service's mission in the most effective and economical manner. Authorizing officials should be aware of travel plans, including plans to take annual leave in conjunction with travel, and will ensure appropriate consideration of the need for the travel, the use of travel substitutes (e.g., mail, teleconferencing, etc.), and the most cost effective routing and means of accomplishing travel.

2.4 Types of Travel Authorizations. The following types of travel authorizations are prescribed in the Service:

A. Unlimited Open Travel Authorization.

(1) This authorization covers travel throughout the United States and its territories and possessions as may be necessary during the fiscal year in which the authorization is issued without designation to specific points or geographical areas. This authorization may only be used by members of the Service Directorate, except the Director and Deputy Director.

(2) As a part of the Department's overall effort to strengthen controls over travel, the Director and Deputy Director will use trip-by-trip authorizations (see 2.4C). To avoid delays, the Director is authorized to direct her or his own travel; i.e., approve her or his travel authorization before the trip begins.

B. Limited Open Travel Authorization. Employees will be issued annually (fiscal year basis) limited open travel authorizations (LOTA). The LOTA will contain authorization for attendance at conferences, meetings, and training and for foreign travel (see 532 FW 2) as directed by the employee's supervisor. Travel involving conferences, meetings, training, or foreign travel will require application of policies and procedures and approval requirements as specified in Part 265.

C. Trip-by-Trip Travel Authorization. This authorization is required for employees who travel infrequently (less than two times per fiscal year) as well as other authorized travel that is not within the scope of a limited open travel authorization.

D. Permanent Change of Station (PCS). This authorization is required for employees who transfer from one official station to another. Additional information on PCS activity can be found in Part 266.

2.5 Travel Authorization Form. Except as noted in paragraph 2.9, the Travel Authorization (Form DI-1020) is required for all temporary duty travel. Instructions for completing the form are provided in the Federal Financial System (FFS) Handbook (260 FW).

2.6 Authorizing Rates on the Travel Authorization. In the majority of cases involving travel, a traveler will have a LOTA.

A. To give employees the benefit of any increase that may be effective after their travel authorization is approved, the rate will be stated as "maximum allowable."

B. In some situations specific rates will be established based on an individual employee's job and the type of travel he or she must do. This unique rate of per diem can be shown on the authorization; i.e., "Camp rate of \$19.00/day."

2.7 Approval of Authorizations. In most cases, trip-by-trip and LOTA will be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. A single level of supervisory review for authorizing travel is to be followed for temporary duty travel. To remind employees and supervisors of their roles and responsibilities involving travel, each is listed on the reverse side of the limited open travel authorization (Exhibit 1).

2.8 Amendments. Form DI-1020 is also used for amendments to the initial travel authorization when a substantial change occurs to the initial authorization. In most cases, this situation will only impact authorizations for infrequent travelers who do not have a limited open travel authorization and travel for permanent change of station. When preparing an amendment, the authorization number must be the same as that of the initial authorization. The purpose of the amendment is entered in Item 10. The remaining items will be completed as appropriate, but it is not necessary to repeat items in the original authorization that remain unchanged. Amendments must be authorized at a level equal to or above the original authorization.

2.9 Travel Without Prior Written Authority. It may happen in emergencies that travel must be undertaken without prior supervisory approval. In these situations, the travel regulations (41 CFR 301) permit approval of travel retroactively. Service policy provides that approvals (after the fact) will be made by an official who could have authorized or directed the travel in advance. A statement explaining the nature of the emergency must be signed by the Approving Official and attached to the travel voucher. Foreign travel for which Secretarial approval is required or travel for which an ethics consideration is present must be strongly justified and post travel approval cannot be assumed.